

Glossary

(May 2022)

- **Agenda** – These set out the business to be considered a formal meetings of the Council, Executive and Committees. They are public documents and are available for inspection before each meeting on the council's website and at the council's main offices.
- **Annual Meeting** - The annual meeting of the Council which elects the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, Leader of the Council and appoints Chairs and Councillors to memberships of Committees. The meeting takes place in May each year.
- **Background Papers** - Documents relating to the subject matter of a report which in the opinion of the Proper Officer: (a) disclose any facts or matters on which the report or any important part of the report is based; and (b) which have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report but does not include published works or those which disclose Exempt or Confidential Information and in respect of Cabinet reports, the advice of a political advisor.
- **Budget and Policy Framework** – Plans and strategies which Full Council have agreed form the budget and policy framework. Once adopted, it is the responsibility of Executive to implement it.
- **Call-in** - "Call In" is a statutory right for Members of the Council to call in a decision of Executive or an individual Executive Member or Executive Members after it has been made or before it has been implemented.
- **Chairman** – the Member elected by Council or a committee to preside over the meeting. The Constitution refers to "Chairman" throughout but an appointed Chairman may request to be addressed as Chair by the meeting.
- **Chief Executive** - The Chief Executive is the Head of the Council's Paid Service (see the glossary for the definition of the Head of Paid Service) and together with the Corporate Directors and Directors are the leadership team that runs the day to day work of the Council working with the Leader of the Council and Executive and supported by the Council's officers. For the avoidance of doubt the Chief Executive includes the following title; Head of Paid Service.
- **Chief Finance Officer** – The responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer rest with the Director of Finance who is the Council's Section 151 Officer. The over-riding duty of the Chief Finance Officer is to fulfil the statutory responsibilities attached to the position.
- **Code of Conduct** - A model code prepared by the Council to regulate the conduct of Local Authority Members.
- **Common Seal** - The Common Seal is the Council's mark of authentication and is attached to documents which are decisions of the Council or any properly constituted body of the Council or to documents which in the opinion of the Monitoring Officer should be sealed or as required by the Contract Procedure Rules. The Common Seal is kept in the safe custody of the Monitoring Officer.

- **Confidential Information** - Information given to the Council by a Government Department on terms which forbid its public disclosure or information which cannot be publicly disclosed by Court Order. (see also exempt information).
- **Constitution** - Every principal Council must produce a document known as the Constitution which sets out how the Council will conduct its business.
- **Contract Procedure Rules** - These provide a corporate framework for the procurement of all goods, services and works for the Council
- **Council Functions** - The local authority functions which by law cannot be carried out by the Cabinet.
- **Councillor** – interchangeable with “Member”, the term used throughout this Constitution. A councillor represents his/her Ward on the Council and acts as an advocate and decision-maker for local issues.
- **Councillor Code of Conduct** - A code based on a national model that must be followed by all Councillors, governing their behaviour and responsibilities.
- **Deputy Leader** - The Member appointed to the position of Deputy Leader by the Leader of the Council.
- **Executive** - The Executive is a group of Councillors including the Leader who work with Council staff to run the Council and take most decisions except those about major policy issues or setting the annual budget (which only the Full Council Meeting can do) or decisions on regulatory matters such as whether to give planning permissions or licenses which only Committees established for those purposes can take. The Leader of the Council appoints the Executive and chairs its meetings. The Executive must consist of a minimum of three Councillors including the Leader up to a maximum of 10 Councillors including the Leader. The Councillors in the Executive each have responsibility for areas of the Council's work allocated to them by the Leader. The Councillors in the Executive can only make decisions within the scope of the overall Budget and Policy Framework set by the Council and the Constitution.
- **Exempt Information** - Information that the Council may not be required to publish because it falls within specific categories defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972
- **Extraordinary Meeting (or, Special Meeting)** - A Council Meeting called by resolution of the Council, the Chairman of the Council, the Monitoring Officer or by requisition of any five Councillors which takes place in addition to an Ordinary Meeting or the Annual Meeting.
- **Financial Procedure Rules** - Control the way the Council manages its finances and safeguards its assets
- **Five clear days** - A period of five days, excluding the day of the meeting, the day on which the meeting is called, weekends and bank holidays during which copies of the agenda and reports of a meeting must normally be available for inspection under the Access to Information Rules
- **Forward Plan** - A notice of matters which the Leader of the Council believes will be the subject of a Key Decision to be considered over the next four months. This is published monthly

- **Full Council** – All 48 Members of the Council meeting together to conduct business
- **Group Leaders** – Political Groups will appoint a person to lead their Group who are known as Group Leaders
- **Head of Paid Service** - This is a statutory appointment under Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Every Council has to have a Head of Paid Service, who is ultimately responsible for the Councils' delivery of good services and is responsible for reporting to the Council on how employees are organised and deployed. The Chief Executive has been designated as the Head of Paid Service, however the roles of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service are separate.
- **Joint Arrangements** – Services provided in partnership with other Councils or by or on behalf of those Councils
- **Key Decision** - A key decision is a Cabinet decision which is likely: to result in the local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates or to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more Wards in the area of the local authority. Note: The Council has determined that incurring potential revenue expenditure or savings above £50,000 or incurring potential capital expenditure or savings in excess of £250,000, or procuring or awarding any contract having a total value exceeding £500,000 will be deemed significant.
- **Leader of the Council** – The Leader of the Council is the political head of the Council, elected by full Council
- **Local Choice Functions** – By law, these are responsibilities which the Council can choose to make the function of Executive
- **Monitoring Officer** - This is a statutory appointment under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The Monitoring Officer is responsible for reporting the actual or potential breach of a legal requirement to the Council Meeting or Cabinet and for dealing with complaints of breaches of the code of conduct by Councillors, reporting as necessary to the Standards Committee. The Director: Law and Governance is the designated 'Monitoring Officer'
- **Officer** - Person appointed to or holding a paid office of the authority or employed by the authority. Officer carry out the decisions made by Members and ensure that council policies are put in place and council services are being delivered well.
- **Ombudsman** – A person independent of the Council who has power to investigate maladministration by the Council
- **Ordinary Meeting** – Council meetings held in accordance with a programme of meetings decided by Council
- **Overview and scrutiny** – a function of local government with specific powers to scrutinise council executive decisions.
- **Political Group** - Two or more Councillors who belong to the same political party or have some other common interest may form a Political Group. Such Groups are recognised by law and in the Council's Constitution.

- **Proper Officer** - A person designated as being responsible for a particular function or range of functions
- **Quasi-judicial** - Powers resembling those of a court of law or judge
- **Regulatory Committees** - Regulatory Committees are comprised of Councillors and are responsible for the overseeing and regulation of certain legislation and legislative processes
- **Reports** – Written items prepared by officers for consideration by Members
- **Section 151 Officer** - This is a statutory appointment required under S151 of the Local Government Act 1972. Every Council must designate an officer as responsible for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs. The Director of Finance has been designated as the Section 151 Officer
- **Vice Chairman** - A Councillor appointed annually by the Council to act as deputy to the Chairman of Council. In the case of Committees, the Member appointed by the Committee who deputises for the Chairman
- **Virements** - A virement is the transfer of budget from one budget head to another. Virements are subject to approval in accordance with the Virement Rules agreed annually by Council.
- **Ward** – a geographical area of the district represented by three Members

- **Types of local authority**
 - unitary authorities – just one level of local government responsible for all local services
 - county councils – cover the whole county and provide 80 per cent of services in these areas, including children's services and adult social care.
 - district councils – covering a smaller area, providing more local services (such as housing, local planning, waste and leisure but not children's services or adult social care), can be called district, borough or city councils
 - parish councils – the first tier of governance operating in the area of a defined civil parish or group of parishes with a wide range of powers relating to local matters. Parish and Town Councils are the same; they have the same powers and act within the same legislation. A Town Council is a Parish Council that has usually decided to have a mayor and call itself a Town Council.